

Data Sheet

USAID Mission:	Honduras
Program Title:	Rule of Law & Respect for Human Rights
Pillar:	Democracy, Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance
Strategic Objective:	522-004
Status:	Continuing
Proposed FY 2003 Obligation:	\$3,100,000 DA
Prior Year Unobligated:	\$0
Proposed FY 2004 Obligation:	\$0
Year of Initial Obligation:	FY 1997
Estimated Completion Date:	FY 2004

Summary: The rule of law and human rights objective is working in five areas in Honduras: assistance to justice sector institutions in the implementation of the new Criminal Procedures Code (CPC); support for an independent, apolitical, and effective judiciary; support for an independent, apolitical and effective Public Ministry (Attorney General's Office); broader, more effective civil society participation in and monitoring of judicial reform; and training to provide a new cadre of legal professionals for the Honduran justice system.

Inputs, Outputs, Activities:

FY 2003 Program:

Criminal Procedures Code implementation and strengthening of justice sector institutions (\$1,700,000 DA). The new CPC, which took effect in February 2002, completely reformed court administration procedures. USAID-sponsored activities will continue to reduce the backlog of cases from the old penal code system and inventory evidence. USAID will work to strengthen the capacity of the reform-minded Supreme Court, the Public Defender's Office, and the justice sector as a whole. Technical assistance will help improve the Judicial Career Law, replicate the court administration and case tracking systems of the pilot courts (two criminal courts were selected as pilots for implementing the new systems), and strengthen criminal justice training within the Supreme Court. Principal contractors are the National Center for State Courts (prime) and DPK Consulting (sub).

More effective Public Ministry (\$600,000 DA). USAID-funded technical assistance and training to the Public Ministry will strengthen the Ministry's prosecutorial function in the new oral trial system by helping it improve coordination with the police on investigations and design and implement improved case management, case tracking, and field support systems. Technical assistance will focus on prosecutor offices outside the capital as much as possible. The Medical Forensics Directorate will benefit from technical assistance and training, particularly in providing scientific evidence at trials. The principal contractor is the Federation of Private Development Organizations of Honduras (FOPRIDEH), an NGO umbrella organization.

Civil society participation in policy reform (\$600,000 DA). USAID will expand its activities to promote justice sector reforms, broader and more effective citizen participation, and greater civil society participation in and oversight of public policy processes to new geographical areas in Honduras. The main policy issues that will be addressed are: administration of justice and judicial reform; citizen security; anticorruption and transparency; and electoral systems. Technical assistance will strengthen NGOs involved in justice sector activities. USAID will reach out to bar associations and judges' associations to enhance their organizational development and increase their understanding of and commitment to justice sector reform. The principal contractor is FOPRIDEH.

Promote ethics as a pillar of the legal profession (\$200,000 DA). USAID will fund a training program to teach students about the U.S. legal system, particularly insofar as it represents a system based on rigorous ethical and professional standards. Follow-on activities will include rural legal clinics, legal

counseling via radio programs, and street-law programs. The principal contractor is the National Center for State Courts.

FY 2004 Program:

Please see Data Sheet for the new democracy and governance strategic objective number 522-ddd.

Performance and Results: Implementation of the Criminal Procedures Code and commencement of oral criminal trials under the new system mark recent milestones for USAID's rule of law program in Honduras. These are significant achievements in that the CPC introduces a transparent and more efficient justice system that provides a fair process for all parties.

The pilot criminal courts in Tegucigalpa and San Pedro Sula, Honduras' two primary urban centers, have installed innovative systems for case tracking and court administration. Replication of these pilot court systems has begun in criminal courts in six secondary cities. To date, 26 trials have taken place in the pilot courts under the new CPC, and all key players have demonstrated a clear commitment to implementing the new procedures and making the system work. Approximately 130 oral trials have taken place around the country, which is very impressive, given that this is the first time Honduras has had oral proceedings in adult criminal cases. Approximately 37% of the 125,500 cases pending under the old system as of March 2000 have been closed and the two pilot courts have inventoried nearly 100% of the evidence within their jurisdiction from the prior system. Under an activity in partnership with the law faculties at two Honduran universities, law students organized seminars and conferences on legal topics including the new CPC, as well as a mock court competition among Honduran universities. The Medical Forensics Directorate of the Public Ministry has provided reliable scientific evidence, much of which was developed using equipment provided by USAID, in oral trials.

The Federation of Private Development Organizations of Honduras (FOPRIDEH), along with a coalition of civil advocacy organizations, has carried out public awareness campaigns and influenced public policy through dialogues with the government. For example, they have taken an adversarial position regarding a proposed constitutional amendment that would curtail Supreme Court authority and allow the Congress to interpret the constitution. FOPRIDEH was also instrumental in ensuring implementation of the new constitutional procedure providing for depoliticized appointment of Supreme Court judges. In compliance with the constitution, a new Supreme Court took office in January 2002, under a revised selection process with civil society participation. The new Supreme Court, the Supreme Court President, and the Interinstitutional Commission for Criminal Justice have demonstrated strong leadership and commitment to reform and are addressing corruption and competence issues in the judiciary.

US Financing in Thousands of Dollars

Honduras

522-004 Rule of Law & Respect for Human Rights	DA	ESF
Through September 30, 2001		
Obligations	11,069	18,896
Expenditures	9,122	17,916
Unliquidated	1,947	980
Fiscal Year 2002		
Obligations	2,500	1,000
Expenditures	2,149	710
Through September 30, 2002		
Obligations	13,569	19,896
Expenditures	11,271	18,626
Unliquidated	2,298	1,270
Prior Year Unobligated Funds		
Obligations	0	0
Planned Fiscal Year 2003 NOA		
Obligations	3,100	0
Total Planned Fiscal Year 2003		
Obligations	3,100	0
Proposed Fiscal Year 2004 NOA		
Obligations	0	0
Future Obligations	0	0
Est. Total Cost	16,669	19,896